

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-10 EA-10 EUR-12 NEA-11 ISO-00
CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-10 LAB-04 NSAE-00
SIL-01 SS-15 NSC-05 L-03 H-01 PA-01 ICA-11
DODE-00 PM-05 TRSE-00 /132 W
-----013193 211856Z /42

R 211725Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7426
INFO AMEMBASSY BERN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY MEXICO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
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AMEMBASSY VIENNA
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AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
AMCONSUL MELBOURNE
USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BRUSSELS 12271

USEEC

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, ICFTU, PINT, ILO, XA

SUBJ: ICFTU HAILS RESULTS OF ILO GOVERNING BODY ELECTIONS

REF: (A) GENEVA 9034(NOTAL) (B) BRUSSELS 6723(NOTAL)
(C) BRUSSELS 5349(NOTAL)

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. OFFICIALS OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS (ICFTU) HERE ARE DELIGHTED WITH THE RESULTS OF THE JUNE 13 ELECTION OF WORKER MEMBERS OF THE ILO GOVERNING BODY IN GENEVA (REFTEL A). THE LEAD ITEM IN THE ICFTU'S SEMI-MONTHLY PRESS BULLETIN SAYS THAT A SLATE PRESENTED JOINTLY BY THE ICFTU AND THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN TRADE UNION UNITY (OATUU) "WIPE THE BOARD" BY TAKING 40 OF THE GOVERNING BODY'S 42 TITULAR, DEPUTY, AND SUBSTITUTE SEATS FOR WORKER MEMBERS.

2. THE ICFTU'S SMALLER RIVAL HERE, THE WORLD CONFEDERATION OF LABOR (WCL) IN A SPECIAL PRESS RELEASE EXPRESSES ITS "DISAPPOINTMENT AND DISAPPROVAL" OVER REJECTION OF ITS "DARING PROPOSALS TO INFUSE THE WORKERS' GROUP OF THE GOVERNING BODY WITH NEW BLOOD." THE WCL'S "DARING" WAS TO TRY, WITH ONLY TWO WCL DELEGATES IN A WORKERS' ELECTORAL COLLEGE OF 122, TO ELECT SIX WCL PEOPLE TO
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THE GOVERNING BODY, INCLUDING ITS VICE PRESIDENT, JEF HOUTHUYS OF BELGIUM. AS A RESULT OF WHAT THE WCL CALLED "THE MANEUVERS OF CERTAIN PARTIES" (I.E., THE ICFTU AND THE OATUU), THE WCL WOUND UP WITH NO ONE FROM ITS RANKS ON THE GOVERNING BODY. IN THE FACE OF CERTAIN DEFEAT, THE WCL WITHDREW ALL ITS CANDIDATES JUST BEFORE THE ELECTION. END UNCLASSIFIED.

3. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL. ACCORDING TO TWO ICFTU SOURCES WHO ATTENDED THE JUNE 13 ELECTIONS, OFFICIALS OF THE WORLD FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS (WFTU) WERE "FURIOUS" OVER THE OUTCOME. AFTER A GREAT DEAL OF CAMPAIGNING, ESPECIALLY IN AFRICA, THE WFTU WAS ABLE TO PLACE ONLY TWO OF ITS PEOPLE ON THE GOVERNING BODY, AND EVEN THOSE JUST BARELY MADE IT:

-- PYOTR PIMENOV OF THE USSR WAS ELECTED A TITULAR MEMBER, BUT CAME IN LAST ON A LIST OF 14, WHEREAS IN THE PREVIOUS ELECTION THREE YEARS EARLIER HE HAD BEEN SECOND, AHEAD OF EVEN JOE MORRIS OF CANADA, CHAIRMAN OF THE WHOLE WORKERS' GROUP.

-- JOZSEF TIMMER OF HUNGARY WAS ELECTED A DEPUTY MEMBER, BUT CAME IN SECOND TO LAST ON LIST OF 14. ORIGINALLY, THE WFTU HAD HOPED WITH AFRICAN SUPPORT TO ELECT TIMMER A TITULAR MEMBER THIS YEAR (REFTEL C).

4. IN THE PROCESS, TWO OTHER WFTU CANDIDATES, CORNELIA FILIPAS OF ROMANIA AND ROMERO ESCANDELL OF CUBA, WERE DEFEATED IN THE ELECTION FOR DEPUTY MEMBERS, BUT GIDEON BEN-ISRAEL OF ISRAEL, A PRIMARY WFTU TARGET FOR ELIMINATION, WAS REELECTED A DEPUTY MEMBER.

5. THE RESULT, ACCORDING TO OUR SOURCES, WAS A SEVERE SETBACK IN THE INDIVIDUAL AND JOINT EFFORTS OF THE WCL AND THE WFTU TO RALLY THE THIRD WORLD TO THEIR BANNERS
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AND TO CREATE A "RENEWED" EAST-WEST INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION STRUCTURE. IN FACT, AT A MEETING OF THE ILO CONFERENCE WORKERS' GROUP, A WFTU DELEGATE FORMALLY LAUNCHED THE PROPOSAL (REFTEL B) TO ESTABLISH A JOINT ICFTU-WCL-WFTU "SECRETARIAT" FOR THE WORKERS' GROUP AT

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BRUSSELS 12271

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THE ILO, BUT JOE MORRIS, CHAIRMAN OF THE SESSION, RULED IT OUT OF ORDER BECAUSE THE GROUP'S STANDING ORDERS CALL NOT FOR A "SECRETARIAT," BUT FOR A "SECRETARY" (WHO IS THE ICFTU REPRESENTATIVE IN GENEVA).

6. JUST BACK FROM GENEVA, JOHN VANDERVEKEN, ICFTU ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY, PROVIDED USEC LABOR ATTACHE WITH THE FOLLOWING EXPLANATION FOR THE ICFTU/OATUU VICTORY:

-- THE OATUU PUT FORWARD A "MODERATE" LIST FROM AFRICA, "ONE THAT WE COULD LIVE WITH, ALTHOUGH IT HAD NO ICFTU PEOPLE FROM AFRICA ON IT--BUT THEN IT HAD NO WFTU PEOPLE EITHER."

-- AFTER COUNTING NOSES, BOTH THE ICFTU AND OATUU AGREED THAT AN ALLIANCE BETWEEN THEM WOULD PRODUCE THE BEST POSSIBLE DEAL FROM THEIR RESPECTIVE POINTS OF VIEW. WITHOUT SUPPORT FROM THE OATUU, BEN-ISRAEL OF HISTADRUT, FOR EXAMPLE, WOULD PROBABLY HAVE BEEN DEFEATED, ACCORDING TO

VANDERVEKEN. AS IT WAS, ON THE NIGHT BEFORE THE ELECTION, THE LIBYAN PRESIDENT OF THE OATUU URGED HIS COLLEAGUES NOT TO VOTE FOR THE ISRAELI.

-- IN NEGOTIATING A COMBINED SLATE, DENIS AKUMU, OATUU
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GENERAL SECRETARY, GOT STRONG MORAL SUPPORT FROM THE TANZANIAN WORKER DELEGATE, A.C. TANDAU, WHO IS ALSO A TANZANIAN MP AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO. DURING LAST-MINUTE NEGOTIATIONS, FOR EXAMPLE, IT WAS TANDAU WHO FIRMED UP ACCEPTANCE OF THE ICFTU'S FRANK WALCOTT OF BARBADOS ON THE TITULAR LIST RATHER THAN TIMMER OF HUNGARY, EVEN THOUGH SOME AFRICAN COMMITMENTS HAD ALREADY BEEN MADE TO TIMMER.

7. WHETHER THE ICFTU-OATUU ELECTORAL ALLIANCE WILL LEAD TO MORE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO ORGANIZATIONS ON AFRICAN REGIONAL LABOR ISSUES REMAINS UNCLEAR. "WE'RE STILL SORTING THINGS OUT," SAYS VANDERVEKEN. MORRIS

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